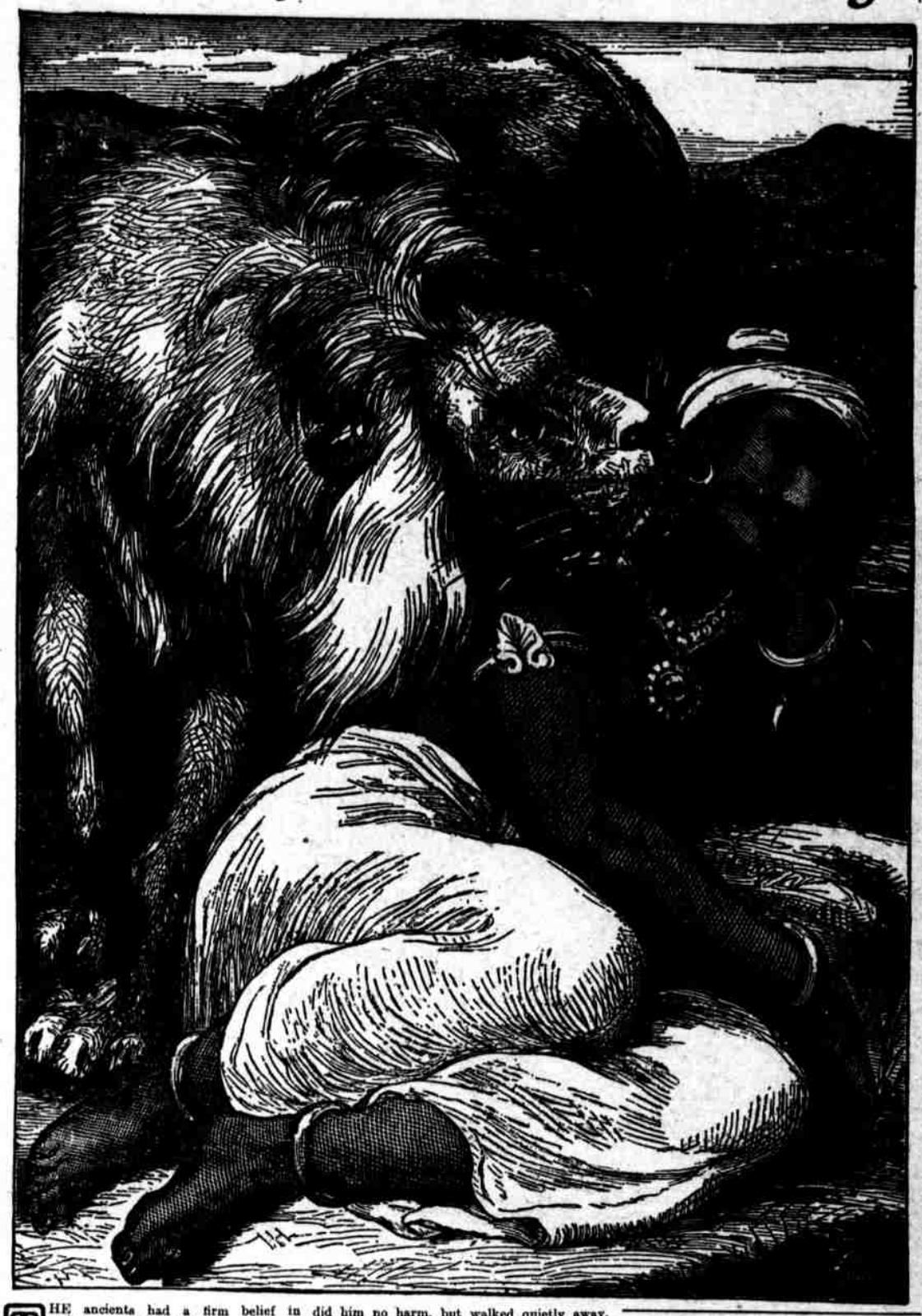
A Story of an Indian King



THE ancients had a firm belief in the generosity of the lion. He was the king of beasts, not only from his immense strength and majestic aspect, but from the royalty of his nature. It was supposed that he never attacked human beings except when he was driven to it by extreme hunger. It was thought that he could be moved to pity, and sometimes spared defenseless travelers through compassion; and that his instinct enabled him to recognize true kings. All these poetic fancies have faded away before the experience of modern travelers, but the lion is certainly not so fierce or subtle as the tiger, nor has he the cruel eyes of that terrible creature. When in a state of repose there is no trace of ferocity in his expression, and as he sits in his grandeur, with his magnificent mane flowing about his neck and shoulders, he has an air of regal dignity and majesty that might well give rise to the old stories of his nobleness and generosity.

When Alexander the Great invaded India, and had advanced to the river Hyphasis, in the Pendjab, there came an Indian to his camp from a far-distant kingdom on the river Ganges. This man, whose name was Sandrocottus, appears to have been of doubtful origin, though some writers say that he was related to the royal family of his own country, and was sent on an embassy to the Macedonian king. However, he offended Alexander, who ordered him to be put to death, and he fled from the camp and only saved his life by the swiftness of his feet. After he had traversed a great distance, thinking he was out of danger, and being weary and footsore from his rapid flight, he lay down to rest. He fell asleep, and a great lion came softly to him, and gently licked his face as he slept. Sandrocottus awoke in terror, and when he saw the lion standing over him expected to be torn to pieces, but the majestic animal did him no harm, but walked quietly away.

When Sandrocottus recovered from his astonishment and fear, he concluded, from the respect which the lion had shown for him, that he was destined to be a king. Now his native country was governed by a king who was a cruel tyrant, and greatly disliked by the Brahmins, or priestly order of the Indians. Sandrocottus, gathering together certain outlaws, headed an insurrection against this king, and mounted the throne himself, and became one of the most powerful monarchs who had ever reigned in the East. He defeated and drove out the Macedonians that Alexander had left in possession of Northern India. And when Seleucus Nicator, who became King of Syria after the death of Alexander, tried to recover the Macedonian conquests, and invaded the kingdom of Sandrocottus, he completely failed, and the Greeks never again gained a footing in the country. The capital city of Sandrocottus was called Palibothra, and there he reigned in glory and prosperity until his death.

Logical

The following was overheard recently on a street corner.

Boy Number One was enjoying a large apple with profound indifference to the admiring, envious silence of his two companions.

Boy Number Two's endurance at last gave way under the extreme pressure, and he said:

"Give us a bit, Jack?"

"No," replied Number One. "That's greedy. I never gives to them what asks."

Here Number Three broke in, eagerly:

"I did'nt ask yer for any, did I, Jack?"

"No," said Jack. "That's a good fellow, you doesn't want any."

Very Conclusive

THERE is nothing over which people are apt to become more earnest than a question which affects their national pride or love of country. In such a matter, they will use all the resources at their command to defend their side of the case, and vie with each other as to who can show the most wit and brightness.

Whoever attempts a discussion of this kind with an American generally finds that he comes in second at the end. Whether he be man or boy, an American's repartee is always bright and good-humored, and his adversary has to be quick-witted in order to silence him. Here is an instance:

A gentleman from this country, who happened to be in Quebec, thought he would like to inspect the citadel, which is rich in history. An officer detailed a soldier to show the visitor around, and he took him everywhere. As the American was leaving, he noticed a small black cannon, half hidden by the snow, and said, jestingly:

"Well, I guess I'll take this away with me."

The soldier laughed.

"I don't think you will," he replied, "after you have seen the inscription on it."

The American stooped down and read:

"Taken at the Battle of Bunker Hill, June 17, 1775."

Then he glanced slyly around, and saw the soldier still smiling. He felt that the latter had the best of it, and this made him cudgel his brain for a fit reply.

He read the inscription over again to gain time, and then, turning to the soldier, said:

"Young man, you've got the cannon, but we've got Bunker Hill."

That settled the soldier; he was silent.

The Hazing of Prince Azuma

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FOR many years our government has accorded to foreign nations the privilege of sending, at their own expense, youths to the naval school at Annapolis to learn the arts of war. The Japanese were among those who most willingly availed themselves of the privilege, and when I was at the Naval Academy there were two Japanese there, both of whom are now prominent in their home navy. They are Admiral Matzmulla and Captain Katz.

About two years after my arrival, Prince Azuma, a brother of the Mikado, came to the academy. He was then a lad of sixteen, and was accompanied by a valet, this being the only instance in which a cadet had been allowed an attendant, and special permission had to be obtained from Washington. Matzmulla was a classmate of mine, and Katz had been at the academy one year.

They still haze the newcomers to the Naval Academy, but in my time the practice was carried on to an even greater extent than it is now. The third classmen were very attentive to the newcomers, but, by common consent, the Japanese were never interfered with, nor were other foreigners. They were therefore spared the ignominy of dangling in baskets from the outside of windows, roosting in trees, grinding imaginary hand-organs, and other tasks, from which no American student was exempt.

None of us would, however, have cared to haze the Mikado's brother. He was small in size and very delicate, being also modest and bashful.

He could never have passed the physical examination necessary if he had been an American. His condition, therefore, appealed to our sympathies.

We had a sort of reverence for him, too, as in those days the sacredness of the Mikado's person was more generally believed, and we feared that if his great relative were interfered with, our government would mete severe punishment on the offenders.

Katz was a very different sort of a fellow. Most Japanese are small in stature, but he was as big as any of the Americans. He had escaped hazing, but he never appreciated his immunity, and I believe he would have rather come in for his share. He was a jolly, rollicking fellow, who could enjoy a joke as keenly as any member of his class, and joined in all the pleasures of school-life, including those forbidden as well as those permitted.

Katz had become thoroughly imbued with American ideas, and told us that he intended to haze the prince. He was a member of the class above the prince, which, according to the traditions of the academy, had a right to worry the class in which the prince was.

We laughed at him, but never imagined that he would be so rash as to carry out his threats.

Not two weeks after the arrival of Prince Azuma his valet rushed frantically into the quarters of the officer of the day, with horror depicted in every line of his face. He declared to the officer of the day, who was as horrified as the valet, that "My Lord Katz was taking the most unseemly liberties with the person of his august master, the Prince Azuma."

The officer, alarmed, hastened toward Azuma's rooms. This is what he heard as he drew near:

"I will have you ordered home, and then your head will be chopped off."

"Oh, thunder! What's the matter with you? This isn't Japan, and if you don't kick higher and keep up that whistling I will singe your hair for you."

Just then the officer rushed in, and saw Azuma, in his night-robe, executing some very high steps, with puckered lips. Katz, with a candle in his hand, was encouraging him to greater efforts.

The officer of the day, of course, stopped the third classman's amusement at once. Katz was sent to the guard house. Without demur he bore the punishment which was meted to him as a hazer, but he indignantly protested to his fellow-students against the class distinctions in a free country.

Katz's head was not chopped off. The prince forgave him, and he afterward became a captain in the Japanese navy.

Reed and His Teacher

Ex-Speaker Reed's boyhood was not particularly eventful. He was tall and steadey and had not the chubby face of his late years of prosperity and power. He was independent in his ways and decidedly outspoken—a trait which he inherited from his mother. He often got a birching from his teacher, for, in spite of being a good student, he was mischievous.

"If any one knows of any reason why these apples should not touch the lips of Tom Reed, let him speak now, or forever hold his peace," said the young rascal, one day, right under the master's nose.

And he gave a bite at one of the great red cheeked apples in his hand.

Quick as a flash, out came the birch, and the teacher said:

"If any one knows any reason why this rod should not warm the jacket of Tom Reed, let him speak now, or forever after hold his peace."

"I do," said Tom.

"Name it," replied the master.

"In compatability."

He did not get the whipping.

Thought Well of Himself

A small boy in one of Marshall Field's stores, in Chicago, approached his employer and asked for an advance in salary.

"How much are you getting a week now?" asked the merchant.

"Four dollars and a half, sir."

"And how old are you?"

"Twelve, sir."

"Why, my boy, at your age I wasn't paid that much."

"Well, maybe you weren't worth it to the firm you were working for, but I think I am."